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IVORY, APES and PEACOCKS.

(*An African Contemplation.*)

Alex. Hargreaves Walton

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‘IVORY, APES, AND PEACOCKS.’



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AN AFRICAN CONTEMPLATION.

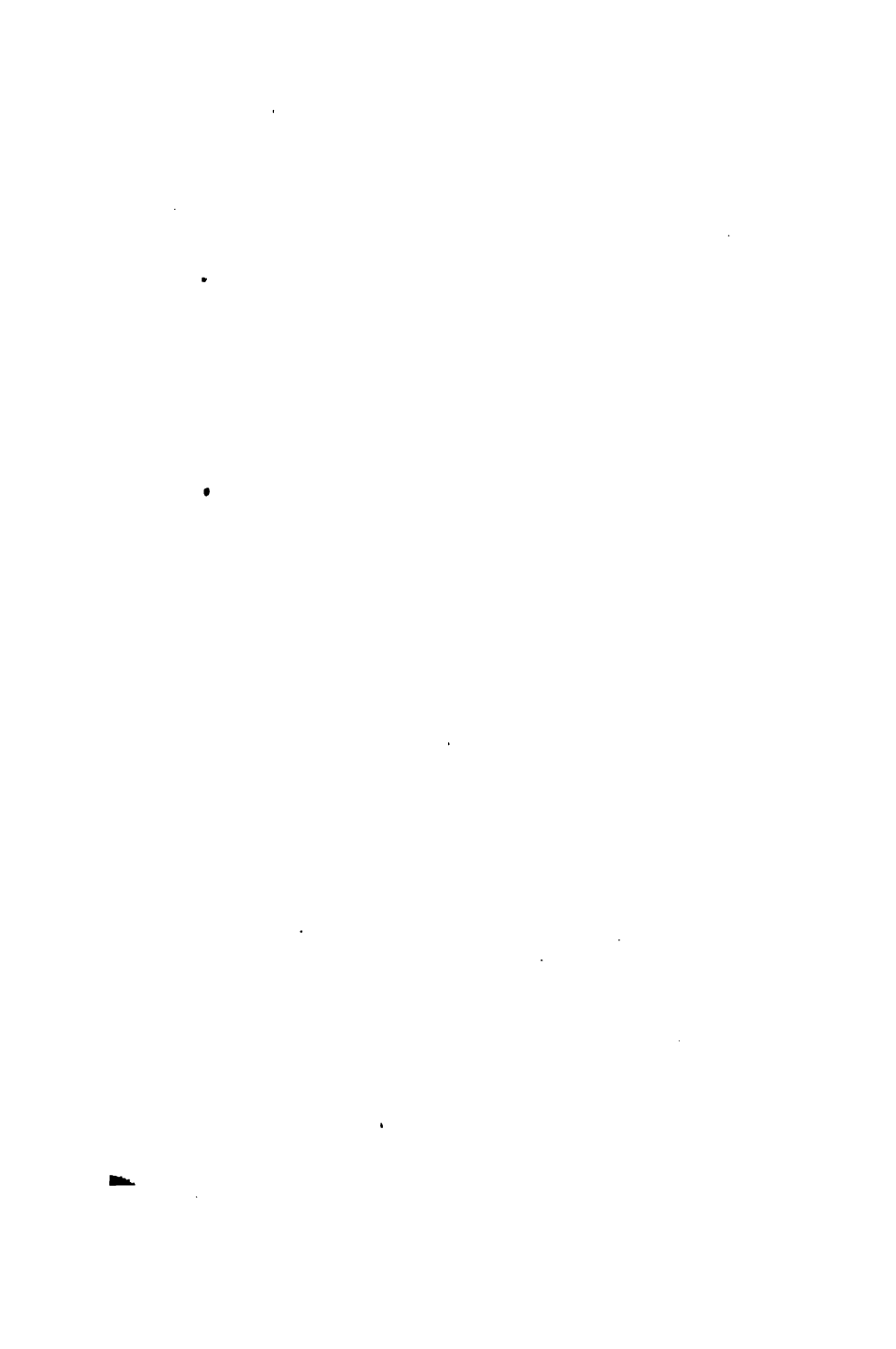
BY THE

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EDITOR OF "LIVINGSTONE'S JOURNALS," ETC.

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PREFACE.

As the New Year opens out it may be well to review three circumstances which combine to make Africa more than ordinarily interesting to us.

In the first place, the fact is established beyond all question that we have at last re-discovered one of the great gold-producing centres of ancient days in the southern portion of the continent. Secondly, we witness a systematic plan organized by the Arabs for supplying the world with ivory in quantities hitherto unheard - of, an enterprise which concerns the middle section of the continent. Thirdly, we have induced the civilized Powers

to share a burden which hitherto we in Great Britain have borne single-handed ; and the ink is drying on a document where, writ large, are the signatures of those who henceforth join us in an earnest attempt to put an end to the slave-trade.

Placing on one side the last of these, we pass to the central and southern sections of Africa, and it is only too apparent that, with a careful examination of facts, an extraordinary difference presents itself in the prospects of the people who inhabit the two spheres.

It may be summed up thus :—In the south of Africa events are tending to stay a headlong process of destruction, to turn the tide of disaster, and to raise up nations which must inevitably have come to an end but for an interference upon their behalf, as evidently providential as it was eminently unexpected.

But with regard to central Africa no such happy signs are visible. Here we find forces at work which tend to utter annihilation.

In the following pages the intention is to look upon African matters more from the natives' point of view than is usual. It will be shown that Africa will be for the Africans for many a day yet, and that just as they increase and multiply where law and order reign, so shall we find it necessary to get rid of preconceived ideas respecting colonization, which, however suited to countries in which the aborigines die out before us, will be altogether beside the question in Africa.

I trust also to show that with every inclination in our heart of hearts to behave fairly, nay beneficently, towards the inhabitants of the countries opened out to us, a great danger exists lest we become more and more compromised by a singular willingness to waive first principles, when the demand is made

upon us to do so by persons with whom it is indeed hard to differ.

From time to time, through the kindness of the Press, I have been enabled to point out some of the weak places in our African programme. I have reverted to one or two in a different form. Plainer speaking is called for as we rest on our oars, and whilst breathing-time is given to the Powers who are considering whether they shall ratify what they have already once signed at Brussels. I have not hesitated to use it.

HORACE WALLER.

Twynwell, Thrapston,
Feb. 16, 1891.

‘IVORY, APES, AND PEACOCKS.’

THE scramble for Africa has about come to an end, and we are now concerned with ‘scrambles’ in Africa. ‘Scrambles,’—that word which in its most delightful aspect means heels in the air, eyes on the ground, buttons flying, grimy nails,—together with sweets for some, bruises for others, but success to him who is quickest to see where the handful falls thickest.

‘Scrambles’ it is indeed ! Diamonds, ostrich feathers, nuggets, and tusks are scattered broadcast by a hand no one has time to look at, for it is a swirling head-over-heels rush—the gifts, not the giver, are the first consideration. And so Portuguese epaulets, Arab

turbans, solar topees, the red shirt of the Australian digger, and the Boer's hat are now where they should be, and the next moment under-foot! Here a Moçambique convict splutters a mixture of Portuguese and Kaffiale to a thrusting 'exploiter'; the latest arrival from Fatherland is in the thickest of the fight, whilst a Cape Premier showers blessings and hopes everywhere, from the bag which a paternal Government holds.

What does it all mean? Fortunes. Well, perhaps; but the fortunes will affect many, and they will by no means stay amongst those who wear pockets into which they can be dropped. South Africa is stimulating in a strange manner some of the oldest weaknesses known to the human race. It would be an altogether amusing spectacle to watch the process were there not a serious side to it.

Civilization is, in fact, engaged in polishing up old heirloom vanities. New lights catch the filigree work, and we see beauties in the pattern never before observed, for the African sun is a bright one. Finery is finery all the world over; but as a weakness it is capable

of affording strength—aye, thew and sinew for whole nations which we shall proceed to show.

It may seem almost as far-fetched as the very ‘Ivory, apes, and peacocks’ of King Solomon’s time to draw out from the early pages of the human race’s history material for soliloquizing over the ferment which ‘is going on now in that strange old land of Africa, but the purport of the sailings from Ezion Geber and the Victoria Docks are all one. It is in each case a freight of adventurers bent on supplying the demand—not for food, but for finery. The feathers and frippery of three thousand years ago took a great part in the world’s affairs, and history ever repeats itself.

It was a luxurious age then; men and women were pretty much what they are now. The Court of the Wise King teemed with tastes and fashions not entirely of home growth, and the feast was the time to display them.

The ape who chumps nuts to-day in the Zoological Gardens—the first to be visited, lord of the monkey-house—is not the only traveller of his race. His father still barks amongst the rocks of the Cape ‘Kopje’;

he can take his place in the long line down from the hillside to the mealie-garden, and pass along—fire-bucket fashion—the stolen corn from paw to paw, till it is secreted where none but the leopard of his dread can set foot. But pass down the line of his ancestors, get to the roots of his genealogical tree, and it was not always after this fashion. Hiram's sailors taught his progenitor tricks which were in due course to be played before the ivory throne. Promoted to a golden chain, he could twitch feathers—the remaining feathers of his peacock shipmate—before princesses from the four winds, laughter-compelling; gibbering for nuts and notice as his scion must to-day if he wants one or the other.

We will refer to this perhaps again. It must suffice if I point out that we can read between the lines of our Bible history plenty of evidence to show that both the well known and the little known world too were ransacked for the satisfaction of the fashions and foibles current in the harems of Jerusalem, and amongst the princes of the day.

It was in this manner that the dwellers at

one end of the earth came to know the ways of those who lived at the other, and the consequences were of the highest importance to the barbarians of the age.

Hiram's captains and caravans left more behind them than bales of barter goods when they set sail homewards, to dodge in and out of Red Sea coral reefs till they reached Ezion Geber. They were wise in their generation, and what they spread over the land previous to departure was the leaven of a good name. As a wonder-working ferment it raised a curiosity in the minds of men, and a craving in the souls of all, that became at last unendurable to queens, sultans, sheiks, and subjects. They needs must go and see for themselves. It was the young world's Hadj.

To have seen Jerusalem, and to have learnt from Solomon himself of the wisdom of the Creator, had apparently little to do with the smooth loveliness of ivory, or the jerk and grimace of the monkey's wrinkled, brain-racked face; but I suspect this is because we don't trace cause and effect as we should.

The evolutionist may claim his triumph in

these Eastern seas. The Arabs say that their dhows are still built on Solomon's lines, but our native policy certainly is not. If you look into the hold of the dhow of to-day, instead of the ape, carefully prepared for Royal smiles, you may find human beings huddled in misery and chains destined for the clove plantation in the British Protectorate. Heaven help us to evolve something better than this in course of time!

* * * * *

There are Africans and Africans; we must sort them out, and the spot we will choose for the operation shall be hard by the great river Zambesi. Personally to me it is a sacred one. Thirty years ago I lay there under a great tree in the scorching heat, taking in my first lessons of thought and pity for the seething tribes around us. My tutor was one who had already spent many years of a glorious life in planning better things for the most contemptuously passed over of God's children, and he spared no pains to enlist pity for them in the presence of their enemies.

Let me then describe the state of the races spread around us as David Livingstone and I lay looking up at the blue sky through green leaves, where the navigation of the river Shiré ceases.

It may be well to enlist for the purpose a rough-and-ready simile. Probably most of us have had the monotony which clings to an unpunctual railway and a cold platform broken by watching a coal-train in the act of shunting to make way for our overdue conveyance. First there is the short whistle, then comes a bump, followed by thud after thud, quicker and quicker, as each truck is driven back upon its fellow, and at last the whole thing is out of sight in a siding.

Forty years ago a train of African tribes stood on a curved line which stretched from the Moçambique channel on the east, bent round and touched Lake Nyassa on the west, and then came south till the last truck stood pretty much on the spot of our contemplations.

The tribes were coupled together by strong links of common interest, but tattoo marks as different as the lettering on the aforesaid

coal-trucks showed that they varied in tongue and custom.

Taking them in order, there were next to the seaboard the Macoas ; next to them the Yaos ; then the Machinkas ; and finally, down to the Shiré itself, came the Manganjas, on whose land we now basked and cogitated.

It must be about forty years ago since all these were set in motion, and fell back crashing and smashing each other, owing to a dreadful impetus given by an engine of destruction which nothing in savage Africa is able to resist, and this was neither more nor less than the trade-musket with the Tower stamp upon it !

If one searches amongst the white-headed survivors of the released slaves of Cape Town, it is quite possible to find here and there a Macoa man with the horse-shoe totem of his tribe still set upon his forehead. He and his countrymen were the first to suffer, the first to fill the slave ships, and the first to be set free upon the high seas by ourselves. Driven back by the slave agents, the Yaos' land was filled with desperate refugees, and

the Machinkas in turn felt the disaster, as hordes of famine-stricken Yaos compelled them to leave their burning villages and to become invaders in turn. It was our lot to see as many as three villages in flames in a morning's journey, when the timid and cowardly Manganjas' turn came, and then the wreck of the whole train was final and complete.

‘Scattered and peeled’ indeed! If one wishes to realize what Isaiah saw in the future for Africans, he should bury himself amidst the remnants of these nations for twelve months—mix with their sorrows and fears as our missionaries do. He would then understand what the expression means; and, to come down to matters very material, he would comprehend that European firearms are the great instruments towards this dismal end.

Five days' canoe journey, with the face set southwards, and these countries are left behind. The river Zambesi is in view, and the divisional line between the East African peoples is reached.

* * * * *

From nations that have no history we must take so much upon trust that it is better to content ourselves by saying that the Kaffirs are different in nearly every characteristic. Their frontier is the Zambesi. True, under extraordinary pressure some members of the race have broken bounds and wandered northwards, but we will deal with them presently. We have just left a land where the arts of warfare are crude and savage ; we have been amongst the bow-and-arrowites, and now we trace out a few records concerning the men of the assegai-and-shield.

In the early part of the century undisciplined hordes tried their strength against English soldiers, who faced them in defence of the Cape Colony. Defeated and scattered, they retired to their mountains and examined for themselves the causes of disaster. Unlike the more northern nations, the Kaffirs from time to time raise up from their midst men of prodigious intellect and bravery. The history of the long warfare between the Dutch Boers and the Kaffirs, who were led by Chaka, Dingaan, and Mosilekatzé, is an extraordinary

one. The Kaffirs had found to their cost what troops in motion and the charge of regiments could effect. Chaka had all the materials of a Napoleon in him, and henceforth he worked out for himself and his successors a system of military tactics which may be summed up in the one word ‘Isandlhana,’ and about which we know only too much.

What the introduction of firearms was to the northern tribes, the adoption of the new drill was to the Kaffir nations. As an engine of destruction it assumed the most awful powers. Nothing could withstand the onslaught of the Zulu ‘impi’ for many years, but in time even braver men than they were set in array against them. These were the Boers who ‘trekked’ from the Cape, and spread over the land from the Vaal river to Natal. Pity is it that the war-correspondent was not then born. Abou-Klea had its equal in a dozen fights which took place between the Boers and Dingaan’s armies. In both instances the white men withstood the attack of Africans who were massed and trained, and without a shadow of a shade of death’s fear amongst them. At

Abou-Klea the provision boxes and the camels' bodies made the rampart, whilst the breech-loading rifle, the Gatling, and the revolver did the rest. The Boer had his laagered waggons and his long-barreled 'roer' with its flint lock only. Making embrasures of his waggon wheels, lying flat and firing low between the spokes, with his vrow as brave as he to load for him, he stretched Kaffirs by the score dead upon the veldt and won the day.

But the new drill was turned to dreadful use in other directions. The point it is desirable always to keep in hand as we proceed is this: these African nations appear to be under a particular spell, and it takes this form, they are driven and dashed one against the other—it is as if some fiendish voice from craig, lake, and swamp was ever crying, '*circulez, circulez, messieurs,*' and compelling them to move and move on ever.

Chaka and Dingaan were powerfully affected by this Satanic refrain. Tribe after tribe was driven hither and thither. This was not sufficient; the conqueror must have a ring of desolation around him. As the first act after

forming a ‘zareba’ is to clear away grass and jungle in order to prevent the enemy approaching unseen, so is it with your Kaffir king. The order goes forth, and at once every human being is cleared off a belt of say a hundred miles in width around the tribe. As far as the spear can insure it this strip is never crossed. The great tribe of the Matabeles arose when Mosilekatzé fled northwards from Dingaan, quite ready to repeat near the Zambesi the barbarities which he and his fellow-deserters found unendurable near Natal. He in turn rendered life so terrible that in some cases his new subjects were fain to fly as he had fled. The result was a remarkable one, and has had much to do with the history of Africa, though at the time of course it was a movement likely to escape notice—a mere rustle amongst the leaves as compared with the terrific cyclone raging amongst the Kaffir nations.

It requires a great deal to make a Kaffir take to the water, but needs must when fiends like these chiefs drive. So it came about that forty years ago one or two small parties

of Matabeles, with their shields and assegais, begged, borrowed, or more probably stole Zambesi canoes and crossed its waters.

The results may be easily conceived. Separating into bands, the whole country fled before them. With a method in their massacres, they spared boys and drafted them into their camps; they took as wives and slaves the younger women of the panic-stricken villages, and the men were ruthlessly exterminated.

In these few words is sketched the origin of newly-created nations which have come upon the scene in the land where we watched the train of tribes crashing and smashing each other. Under various names we have them on the east, west, and north of Lake Nyassa. For instance, in the British 'sphere of influence' they are the Angoni. The Germans are about to try conclusions with them as Magwangwara, between the lake and the coast; whilst Major Wissmann is engaged with Wa Tuta warriors near Lake Victoria Nyanza, speaking likewise the Zulu tongue of Natal.

In each case the Zulu blood has been as diluted as the Zulu courage—little enough of

either survives. But just as the scent of a ferret will make rabbits lie out in the open and forsake their burrows, so will the rattle of shield and assegai in the forest, or a glimpse of the black plumes and monkey skins on the hill, raise a scare in any village of aboriginal east Africans. All is a pell-mell stampede, whilst the smashed skulls of the old and decrepid certify to those who steal back when darkness comes on that they were wise to give way before the knobkerrie, spear, and shield—which they are as ignorant of in warfare as their forefathers were. It is more than probable that when these devastating hordes come to mass themselves against European troops the spell will be broken once and for all, because, as we have shown, the true Kaffir blood is hardly present at all under the assumed Kaffir dress.

Briefly to recapitulate; to the north of the Zambesi there are cowardly tribes fit for the slave-traders’ purposes, and disintegrated by the presence of firearms, without power of cohesion, and not given to discipline of any sort. Their fate is made worse by the in-

cursion of small bands of Zulus who have crossed the Zambesi.

To the south of that great river are the Kaffir nations who despise firearms and the bow and arrow alike. These are pastoral in their habits, and far too dangerous for the slave-trader to try conclusions with.

* * * * *

Our hasty glance reveals to us a closely-packed division of the great native population of Africa perturbed from end to end by an inherent and debased appreciation of human life. The lust of conquest has been the destructive element to the south of the Zambesi, whilst across its waters a strange infatuation encourages the presence of the Portuguese slave agent and the Arab ivory dealer. In neither instance is peace more than a phrase with which to give polite point to a salutation. But we now proceed to discover in the midst of all this tendency to bloodshed and destruction a very singular characteristic.

Give to your African the slightest advantage—afford him just the lick-and-promise of law and authority at the white man's hand—at

once his tribe increases, and this in spite of the introduction of those exterminating exotic diseases which have proved so disastrous to native life in other parts of the world in which Britain has founded colonies.

For the colonist's purpose this need not be a dilemma; on the contrary, it must and will prove to be of immense advantage in Africa, but probably in Africa only.

Neither the Australian aborigines, the Maoris, nor the Red Indians have contrived to make themselves indispensable to the white man. In each case a thirst for revenge follows upon the first collision, and the aborigines brood over the possibility of the scalp or the skull yet satisfying what is a savage instinct. This is positively absent in the African. There is no blood-feud which can possibly disturb the hours which succeed his defeat; he will forgive and forget the worst beating to-morrow! One hesitates to say off-hand that this trait in his character at once raises him higher in the scale of humanity than the vindictive Sioux or the Afghan frontiersman; but it will inevitably

provide for him toleration and safety. It is possible that the point has not been sufficiently borne in mind in reckoning with our future transactions amongst the tribes in question.

But Africa's real safety lies in the fact, that the man born of her soil is the one who must inevitably develop her riches, if the earth is ever to render them up, be they baubles or bullion.

Let us then proceed to observe the wonderful factors which are tending to save and to raise the African tribes at the end of this century, now that we have scanned the various points of difference which compel us to give them a separate place amongst those nations of the earth too often doomed to disappear before the advance of the European.

The truth is stranger than fiction. Early in the Sixties there was hardly a more profitless tract than that which lay near the Vaal river. A Cape waggon and 'trek' team would have been current money with the Boer in exchange for a thousand acres. At the present moment one of those acres is probably the most precious in the world; the Bank of England's site would fetch less in the open market! To

the well-wisher of the human race this must appear as almost a miracle, and just at the time when the saving of a section of the African people needed it.

Natives flock to the Diamond Fields (for we allude to these) from all quarters and from places hitherto unknown to the European. How different is their fate even to that of other African labourers. If you visit the clove plantations of Zanzibar and Pemba, you notice that the Arabs find it answers their purpose to drag thither wretched slaves procured at a mere nominal cost, and ‘to work them out,’ that is literally to death, in from seven to eleven years, for they are easily replaced; and our precious bad bargains, the Arabs, do this whilst we look on askance.

But it is far otherwise in the Kimberley district. Here honesty towards the native is in all ways the best policy; the object of the manager is to get together natives out of whom their natural honesty shall not be crushed either by the canteen-keeper or the “I. D. B.”¹ wretch who in an hour will fill the

¹ Illicit diamond buyer.

Kaffir's mind with more devices for secreting diamonds than his village witch doctor could have hit upon in a twelvemonth. Yes, it pays to keep the workman out of harm's way and temptation whilst his contract lasts. A diamond the size of a robin's egg is a serious matter. It is not a question of molasses filched by the gallon, but of stones worth many pounds sterling per carat. Make your workman your friend and you do well ; debase him to the 'blackbird' level of the Antipodes, and the gem may never be heard of more—except by the scoundrel who has tampered with your man.

The Diamond Fields and the Transvaal Goldfields by comparison lie in a country favourable to European life, for one is not justified in supposing that typhoid fever, which has worked such havoc, is indigenous to Africa at all ; it is, in fact, the direct product of over-crowding at Johannesburg, want of water, and the absence of sanitary precautions in general, whilst all were preoccupied in speculation. Carried hither and thither all over the South African colonies, its right

place is in company with the share-list of bogus mines, and not as a legitimate accident of African adventure.

By leaps and bounds, then, the miners are plunging forward on a burning scent, and even now are head and shoulders down the old workings, which assuredly rang thousands of years ago with those equivalents to 'haul up' and 'lower away' that no man in Africa could understand nowadays. In a word, the miner is getting pretty close to treasures which in many cases will prove dear at any price to the European on the spot.

As if to give him due warning, he will find as he nears the southern bank of the Zambesi that fever—the true African fever—is waiting for him. If he crosses it, there is not a square mile between him and the Soudan on the low levels that it is safe for him to stick a spade into. Solomon and Hiram knew all about this, depend upon it. Quinine had not been discovered in their day. It is a good skeleton-key, and will open some treasure doors that otherwise no Englishman's eye would ever look beyond ; but neither quinine,

arsenic, nor even 'Warburg's drops' will keep the white man's life in the white man's body when he comes to face the malaria which is ever the first product of the virgin soil in truly Tropical Africa.

Diggings there will be in plenty—alas! how many there have been already along the Zambesi bank, but they have been of a pattern too well known; in them heart-wrung treasures have been gently laid, and there they must remain till 'vanity of vanities' has been said for the last time.

* * * * *

So it comes to this—the *African must do the European's work*, and the white man must stand by with the quinine bottle. Just in proportion as the bed-rock turns out more and more, so will the strong arms of the native become more and more indispensable. Here is South Africa's chance of recovery.

The miner of diamonds and gold has—speaking with all reverence—come to save life, not to destroy it, as he has done elsewhere. It pays him to preserve life, and it will answer his purpose to encourage honesty and truth-

fulness, and to become the dispenser of good laws, whilst he is at the same time the compeller of peace. Thus will he stand amidst nations and tribes where the entire reverse of such treatment has been the order of the day far away back into ages of which we have no record. Hitherto we have been principally reviewing the material advantages which are within the African's grasp, and we have regarded the white adventurer merely from the business point of view, whilst at the same time a great deal more is due to him if we quit generalizing, and examine the careers of those who have organized the gigantic enterprises of to-day in South Africa.

But to imagine that the typical miner is our sole representative would be a very bad compliment to the better life in England. The days of the poor well-iced missionary are at an end for ever, and thank God for it! He is no longer dismissed on his errand, chilled down by a soul-murdering mixture in which pity for his hallucinations and the salt of the smug are the component parts.

Our English and Scotch universities are pouring their very best men into all lands and specially into Africa.

It is easy to conjecture some of the results of all this busy coming and going. Good and evil will of course march together. But one thing to look to is this, there are roads opened for good, thanks to the gold discoveries, which had no previous existence.

A Kaffir comes from a distant tribe to work for the European; the seamy side of our life is exposed to him, but he is no fool, and can detect a rascal as quickly as any one. The 'promoter' bids him hold his tongue whilst he fires small nuggets out of his gun against the face of the hard rock that the metal may be driven into the interstices, against the day when he shall bring his dupes to see for themselves the traces of 'visible gold.' He has helped in dead of night to convey part of a 'core' which the diamond drill has brought up from the rich reef, and to drop it into the prepared hole in barren ground, whence it will emerge presently as proof of the richness

of the hitherto rejected claim—another trap for those who put their trust in share lists! He has perhaps his experience of the ‘trunk’ and the canteen, but he stores up other things to remember and retail again.

Far away in his kraal or village his chief waits for his return and what he has to tell. We may perhaps be inclined to leave inquisitiveness out of the reckoning, but it fulfils its useful part in these transforming operations which God has set in motion.

Just as the ‘diamond-drill’ is the only instrument which will penetrate the quartz reef, no matter how hard it be, so will the ‘diamond fancy,’ if we may so term it, pierce into savagedom as nothing else can.

For the hospital at the ‘fields’ is open to the white miner down with typhoid, and to the black workman lying with his broken leg in splints. The ‘Sister’ won’t keep up distinctions in her heart as to the wants of one or the other. The missionary bishop, if he has to be away in the forefront of a distant expedition — consecrating, for instance, an advanced post in Mashonaland—is careful to

leave behind men who can preach the sermon to the Kaffir as well as conduct service for the Englishman. All these things are stored up in the native's mind, as for him undreamt-of wealth accumulates with monthly wage, and the time draws nigh for the expiration of his term and his return to his chief.

It may here be allowable to indulge in a peep behind the scenes.

From one end of Africa to the other the love of beads is great. There is a red one called 'carniola' (which has a white lining, and is manufactured at Venice), that is well-nigh current from the Cape to Cairo. Fashion too prevails in beads. Of a sudden a great demand will spring up for a particular sort, and a large tusk has before now been handed over for a dessert spoon measure of a certain description.

There is an exquisite sense of harmony in colour common to the native mind. Give to an African girl a handful of mixed beads, and she will thread and twist armlets and necklaces, arranging colours and patterns in a manner excessively pleasing to the European

eye. As well suspect a kaleidoscope of blundering in combination, as a Yao woman when she has to adorn her husband or herself.

Just what diamonds are to Europeans and Americans—jewels to delight in—such are beads in the estimation of your African. But if you place both diamonds and beads in the chemist's hands, and bid him bring them down to their lowest common denomination, he quickly does it for you in his prosaic, unsentimental way, and you have as residuum on this piece of paper so much charcoal, and on that, so much silica and metallic product.

Apes and Peacocks! Did the Wise King look from his ivory throne down through the vista of coming ages, and did he arrange by Hiram's means a reproof for us in time to come? Did he see the day when we should sneer at his splendid extravagance, laugh at his bedizened and bedecked wives, deride his dreadful fall, and yet have to confess that the Ape and the Peacock may still stand as supporters on society's coat-of-arms!

They blaze—these brilliant beads on head,

on neck and arm; fulgent they are on shirt-front; it is of the essence of display that they are in place. Who would not ape his or her betters in diamond ventures?

But this is our Kaffir's great difficulty when at last he turns towards home. True he has seen some of the precious stones promoted from the blue earth to the ring and the stud, and the ornaments depicted in the illustrated papers have been explained to him; but he has to make things plain to those more benighted than he, to tribesmen without his advantages.

So he makes his obeisance to his chief, who in turn pushes towards him the hemp-pipe to loosen his tongue. He whiffs and he coughs in the approved fashion, and—he hesitates; for who is likely to give him credence? But he does his best in picturing the activity of our countrymen; he exhibits specimens of their clothes on his own limbs, and he describes the 'scrambles' as I sketched the game just now. He tries to explain, with many an absurd gesture (for your savage is a master of mimicry), the excitement of the

speculator, the accidents, the deaths, and the suicides. He imitates the engine puffing, and the diamond drill at work, and proclaims that the white man does all and goes through all for the sake of the ‘little white stones,’ and nothing else! But this cannot satisfy his chief. So he repeats what his white ‘boss’ told him word for word, viz., that the diamond is neither for magic nor for medicine, but to put on men’s fingers and round women’s necks—‘all same this,’ he exclaims, as he touches the necklace which his wife has already made of his beady wages. What wonder if he fails to convince? His chief growls out ‘Ku nama,’ (you lie,) for who can or will believe that the white man who comes out of the sea will leave his distant home to get—with such toil and moil—why, one particular kind of bead!

It is this which stands out so clearly in our contemplation. Unknown to themselves, nobles of the one sphere and so-called savages of the other are alike responsive to that one touch of nature which comes with the acquired stone—let it cost a fortune or a farthing!

The vital question that for the time affects the minds of millions is this: who shall peacock it to the best advantage? Furthermore, it matters not whether this spirit of emulation has for its outward surroundings the County ball or the Kaffir kraal.

One word more ere we stray away to other parts of the continent, for there is a peculiarly happy augury regarding native life in auriferous Zambesia which we cannot afford to miss.

Looking at the action of the 'Chartered Company,' it is most satisfactory to remember that we have in the executive on the spot a strong infusion of that high-principled, gentlemanlike element which will tell in all directions.¹ In contact with this administration, the barbarous and disgusting *régime* of the Portuguese convict rule must slink away; for the native races, to whom such contact has always been intolerable, are as quick to side with the frank and joking Englishman, as they are repelled and exasperated by the

¹ Native wages in Natal are a fifth of what is paid in the Transvaal, where the Boer law is in force, and calculated to drive labour away.

presence of the expatriated Portuguese, who have so long been an incubus to East Africa.

Again, the Brussels Slave Trade Conference was held in the nick of time. We shall see mining companies of all nationalities working in close proximity. In Swaziland, where no authority worth the name exists, covert transactions in slaves are by no means uncommon at the present moment. The white trader who chooses to pay the price can easily secure lads at so much a head to work with his waggons. But this cannot be the case at the goldfields. For instance, no English miners will tolerate the presence of slave labour on adjoining claims when they themselves have heavy wages to pay away to honest workmen; the provisions of the Brussels Conference will inevitably be brought to bear. In this connection it is a happy thing to point out that the South African Chartered Company will probably enlarge its border to an enormous extent to the north of the Zambesi. In this direction likewise we shall have a close watch set upon those who have bound themselves not to

tamper any longer with the slave-trade. The wholesome rivalry begotten of a demand for native free labour will ensure this, and one is very much mistaken if the clauses of the Convention are not soon as well known as the verses of 'Rule, Britannia' in Southern Africa on both sides of the Zambesi, for it is not likely that its great flood cuts off the auriferous and non-auriferous regions one from the other. (

Throughout the world the principal gold-yielding regions lie in mountain ranges which trend north and south. A glance at the physical geography of the African continent shows us that we shall have here a case in point to prove the rule.

* * * * *

The late Dean Burgon put a very curious question to me when I returned from the slave-preserves of Central Africa—'Did you ever happen to see any personal manifestation of Satan in those regions?' I could but answer 'No.' Having studied the subject of African misery a great deal since then, it would almost seem that the Dean's question was, after all, much to the point.

7
Is it too much to suppose that the careers of such men as Livingstone and Gordon, the enormous influx of missionaries, and the general attention drawn to the cruelties practised in Africa infuriate the fiend who goes to and fro upon the earth to torture and destroy? The soul's warfare is a farce if its possessor never takes his eyes off heaven to think what the machinations laid in hell may be. It is a duty to believe that the Almighty is infinitely loving and kind; but it is also necessary to recognize the delight that our Arch Enemy must feel when superstition increases and bloodshed abounds.

We can imagine also that his rage and fury follow upon anything approaching to an invasion of his haunts by light and life, and that he will wreak extra vengeance upon those who are still within his power.

Possibly, as we go on, it may seem that the regions to the north of the Zambesi are as likely to be distinguished by the very personal activity of Satan as any spot we could place the finger on when we scan the map of the world.

We have thus shown that in more ways

than one the Zambesi forms a strong line of demarcation across the African continent.

The change which is taking place amongst the southern tribes is as marked as it is satisfactory to look upon. Colonists and miners, railways and machinery, are daily invading those more fortunate regions. The sportsman who revisits his haunts of ten years ago on elephants intent, once more hears, as he thinks, the heavy-measured tramp of the Kaffir war-dance; but he is at fault—the rhythmic beat comes from the stamps of the quartz-crusher.

Barbarism is in fact going under. Fifty years ago a Zulu would as soon touch a hoe as strike his chief; to-day the white man puts into his hands pick and shovel, and the spell is broken. But cross the Zambesi and all is different. Not only, I repeat, are you at once amongst cowardly timid tribes, but a special horror pervades the very air you breathe.

Put on one side the handful of missionaries and English traders, and you will scarce find a single foreign dweller in the land who is not bent on cruelty and mischief. And,

what is more to our purpose, you have turned your back on countries sacred to the ‘Ape and Peacock’ of our theme, and are at once in those regions which virtually supply the whole world with ‘Ivory.’

If it seems necessary to scrutinize the horrible condition of the people who come into view as we track the ivory-dealer, we cannot complain of a want of definite information. Apart from books more or less attuned to our love of sensation, the records of our Foreign Office alone furnish a literature at once startling and instructive.

It may be well in treating this portion of our subject (and which relates mainly to the ‘Ivory’ of our title) if we systematically deal in the first place with the East Coast Arab, and subsequently with the lands he affects, and the people on whom he principally inflicts his barbarous cruelties. Finally, we can watch the sudden appearance of the European upon the scene, and decide for ourselves whether his presence is a blessing or the reverse.

For the confusion of the Arab slave-trader England keeps at sea an expensive fleet of

cruisers, and incurs a great outlay in men and money.

To thwart these fellows who load up 'dhows' with slaves, and run the gauntlet of our fleet, I believe that in the ten years preceding midsummer 1890 we lost two hundred and eighty-two officers and men, not including a great number of seamen who were invalided home, and of whom many were so wrecked by fever, sunstroke, and dysentery, that they were retired from the service to live on a small pittance at home. The annual expenditure may be put at £80,000.

Let it be borne in mind that our object is in the first place to let all whom it concerns know, both at home and abroad, that we detest the slave-trade, and take this means to show it; we hope also that the Africans will get to know that we stand their friends. We will see how this works out in practice, and if the result is shocking in the extreme, it cannot be helped.

So we take the Arab slave-trader as he stands on the threshold of Africa; he looks upon us as unjust and dishonest—there is really no other impression possible for him

that one can perceive. We have compelled his sultan to sign and seal all sorts of treaties and proclamations, which bind him to imprison his subjects if they import slaves, and to exercise the utmost vigilance in putting an end to a traffic which is generally followed by a string of make-weight epithets, the mildest of which is ‘accursed.’ Your Arab knows that as a matter of fact these treaties do not much affect him, for they have been more productive of decorations to sultans and consuls than of interference with his business.

It is far more to the point that prize-money—£5 per head for every slave liberated on the high seas—has sharpened up the blue-jackets prodigiously, and that if they catch him running a cargo it will be a dead loss. So far he has grasped the situation and its risks, but for all this he will make the venture, and why?

Once let him successfully smuggle in his slaves, and these very English will be his best customers! This is of course a most extraordinary statement, one which is unjustifiable to the last degree if unsubstantiated.

It may be said, Why go into the matter? will not the recently enacted articles of the Brussels Conference render it unnecessary?

Apart from the fact that more than six months has to elapse before the necessary ratifications are complete, the evil is now existent. Moreover, judging by the past, and the ludicrous fate of former treaties, it may do good to expose some of the facts above-mentioned in detail as a hint for the future. Once smuggled through our cordon of cruisers, we are the best customers for the slaves safely landed.

A railway has to be constructed in West Africa, or an exploring or hunting expedition organized in the interior. The British subject arriving at Zanzibar knows that he may not purchase slaves outright for his purpose; but he may resort to an owner of slaves—or a contractor for slave labour—and he may hire any number on the following understanding. Say the contract is for two years, he must pay down part of the slaves' hire (the result of this we shall see presently), and he must promise to return the hired slave into captivity when the

time expires. It is also agreed that in these transactions it is better to drop the word slave and to substitute either ‘carrier,’ ‘porter,’ ‘labourer,’ or ‘Zanzibari.’ Sometimes, to save appearances more effectually, it is stipulated that some portion of the wages shall belong to the slave, but who is to take care that he is allowed to retain it? No sooner is the expedition over than all is helter-skelter to get back to England, and though the traveller has witnessed the payment himself to the slave who has followed him faithfully, one has yet to find the soft place in the slave-jobber’s heart which will prompt him to let the money remain when the back is turned.

So it comes to this: there is a diligent and costly search afoot to detect slaves in transit upon the high seas. If the Arab is caught his cargo of slaves is confiscated, his vessel burnt, and he is put in chains as a demonstration upon the part of Great Britain, and towards this, be it remembered, every tax-payer contributes.

But so far we have had to deal with the sin of being found out; it is a very different tale with him who does not thus transgress. Only

let him manage to outwit our cruisers by cunning navigation, and lodge his human cargo on dry ground, and he quickly finds customers, and amongst them the foremost are Belgian railroad makers and British explorers !

I should like to drive this point home upon the conscience of my countrymen even at the risk of repetition. Put it this way: the Zanzibar Arab can stand on the shore and witness two vessels simultaneously weigh anchor at the roadstead. The one is a British man-of-war on her way to intercept a cargo of slaves of which our friend has private knowledge which he keeps to himself. The other ship has cleared for the Congo, and flies a well-known European flag. Our Arab had a good deal to do with her cargo a few weeks back, for he succeeded in running a number of slaves which, when duly smuggled away inland for a time, reappeared as 'labourers' to be shipped as such, and no questions asked. Part of his venture he intends to let out as 'carriers' on the morrow to an English expedition—for is not the demand for them even greater than the supply, and must it not be met ?

What wonder that he curses us behind our backs for a set of high-sea thieves ! He is not without a salve for his sorrow, and this he takes good care to apply. Part of his bargain with the hirer of his smuggled chattels was that a deposit of so much per head should be paid. He has this money in hand ; it is enough in each case to buy two raw slaves, and as he knows sly holes and corners in the town where these are procurable, he can and does buy two poor wretches with the deposit he has received for each of those whom he has hired out. In this manner he prepares to fit out the next caravan that the Belgian or Britisher may require.

We need not be surprised if we find that transactions of this kind are not comfortable things to fall back upon when sickness and disappointment smite one. When poor Major Barttelot had leisure to realize his position as a British officer who had allowed Mr. Stanley to cater for him, there was a rude awakening to this equivocal position.

He wrote as follows at Yambuya camp—
 ‘Three-quarters of our men are slaves ; and

'when they get to Zanzibar, poor fellows, they 'only receive one-fourth of their money; the 'rest goes to their master.'¹ It seems that in this particular expedition for the relief of Emin Pasha some 680 men started, and 450 died on the road. There were 623 Zanzibaris in the *cortége*. On the return of the survivors it was stated in the Press that the slaves did go back to their owners and to their captivity. So far he was right in his conclusion.

On the whole, and with such an example before her, it cannot be a matter of surprise that Belgium has taken our hint.

To construct a railway in West Africa, East Africa is ransacked for 'labourers,' and the mode of securing the slaves in the main agrees with what I have set forth. It follows that the slave preserves on either sides of Lake Nyassa are heavily drawn upon for the 'raw' material, with all the usual accompaniments of raids, kidnapping, and slaughter with which we are only too familiar.

'But what are you to do if you cannot get free labourers?' One replies that the doctrine

¹ *Life of E. M. Barttelot*, p. 242.

of the end justifying the means, though not new, cannot be allowed in this case. It is no consolation to the Nyassa chief who gasps out his life with a spear through him to be told that his son, in a slave ship, is being sent off to make a railway, and that some day it may pay dividends to European philanthropists.

Once more let us ask—what can people think of us ?

By easy transition this subject finds us face to face with still more serious matter. Were it just to the Africans it would be easier to place oneself in accord with a pretty general desire to draw down silence now upon the sequels of our last importation of African adventure. But it is not just. The living have had plenty to say for themselves; nor have those who left us to die in Mr. Stanley's wake across Africa left their deeds unrecorded. Now for every white man who perished, hundreds of Africans met their end as a consequence of the Emin Relief Expedition; and I deny that it is wrong, even at this hour, to raise a voice for such as otherwise will have

none to utter a word of lamentation over them, or to avert a similar fate from their kindred.

It is deplorable to think that, from circumstances which I will presently allude to, an amount of mischief has been perpetrated in the Congo districts which hitherto has been unsuspected. It takes a twofold form—dismay to the native mind, and a weapon in the hands of our enemies which, whether it be turned against us by Arab slave-dealers or jealous Europeans, we are powerless to parry.

As a preliminary it is necessary to call to mind what had been done on the Congo before Mr. Stanley's name was known to us in Europe. Apart altogether from personal admiration of the man, one is fain to express unbounded astonishment at the manner in which Dr. Livingstone's revelations have been entirely disregarded in the last four years. His was the task of exposing the barbarities of the ivory dealers. It has been possibly convenient to place them on one side, but this should not be.

I propose then, in spite of all that has been written and said of late, to pick up a scent

which has been entirely trampled out amidst feasts and fêtes—to say nothing of bickerings and revulsions of feeling.

It is nearly twenty years ago since Livingstone entered the Manyuema forest, and, as a matter of fact, he passed some considerable time upon the Congo (visiting places, for instance, where Mr. Jameson wrote a more recent journal), and doing what he could to help the natives who afforded him hospitality.

The imagination need not be much taxed when asked to endorse the statement, that Dr. Livingstone’s career has probably had a more powerful influence for good amongst the benighted races of the earth than any that can be mentioned as belonging to this century.

In every case where the white man puts in a first appearance, the news flies from tribe to tribe. It depends upon his personal conduct whether he opens the lands he travels through for others to follow, or closes them by the fears and bad report he leaves behind him. Rightly to comprehend the effect of Livingstone’s travels, we should trace the development of missionary and civilizing influences

in his wake. The result is a remarkable one. When we watch the various enterprises at work to the north of the Zambesi,—*e.g.* Mr. Arnot's heroic efforts in Garanganzi; the vast ramifications of the Universities Mission; of the Established Church of Scotland; of the Free Church, and the London Missionary Society, and also of the African Lakes Company,—one and all have identified Livingstone's endeavours with their own. Each society has begun with the legacy of Livingstone's good name among the tribes. In every direction in which they have established themselves he had been on the spot previously to make it easier for them.

Between Lake Tanganyika and Stanley Falls, Livingstone spent two of the most distressing years of his life—from August 1869 to August 1871. He was at a loss to know whether the great river of the land was the Congo or Nile. Serious illness held him prisoner in Manyuema in two important towns called Mamohela and Bambarré.

It was impossible for him to get loose from the vile surroundings of the Ujiji Arabs who

were pouring into the district to obtain ivory on terms which excited their avarice to the utmost pitch.

The first desire of these wretches was to produce an impression upon the minds of the natives ; terror must be struck into them at any price, and we read a chapter of horrors in consequence such as is only possible to indite from Central Africa.

But as if to kindle in the hearts of the wretched people one spark of hope, Livingstone was ever the friend to resort to, the mediator who implored the Arabs to recollect that some day they would have to give an account of their fiendish deeds, whilst he offered asylum to people who otherwise would have been massacred.

Thus the native mind had two objects before it. Unmitigated evil stood revealed in the professors of Islam ; whilst goodness, gentleness, and mercy were personified in the white man, Livingstone the Christian.

Of course the better impressions were a great embarrassment to Arabs of the Tippoo Tib class. ‘It was common for old men to

'come forward to me with a present of 'bananas,' Livingstone says, 'uttering with 'trembling accents, Bolongo, bolongo (Friendship, friendship); and if I stopped to make a 'little return present, others ran for plantains 'or palm toddy. The Arab's men ate up what 'they demanded without one word of thanks, 'and turned round to me and said—"They 'are bad; don't give them anything." "Why, 'what badness is there in giving food?" I 'replied. "Oh, they like you but hate us" '1 Again he says—"I overhear the Manyuema 'telling each other that I am the "good 'one." I have no slaves, and I owe this character to the propagation of a good name by 'the slaves of Zanzibar, who are anything but 'good themselves.'

Once more we see how the natives of the Manyuema country held fast to their trust in him in spite of the fact that he was surrounded by the bad Arab influences, and had just been present at a scene of brutal devastation:—"Many of the headmen who 'have been burned out by the foray came over

¹ *Livingstone's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 69.

‘to me and begged me to come back with them and appoint new localities for them to settle in again; but I told them that I was so ashamed of the company in which I found myself, that I could scarcely look the Man-yuema in the face. They had believed that I wished to kill them—what did they think now? I could not remain among bloody companions, and would flee away, I said; but they begged me hard not to leave until they were again settled.’¹

For two years, I repeat, the old traveller lived the life of continual protest. His conduct was the talk of the tribes and the dilemma of the Arabs. He stood between the living and the dead. Armed with a letter from the Sultan of Zanzibar, the ivory raiders knew the hazard to be too great, so they dare not kill him, though they did their best to thwart him by cutting off supplies, whilst at the same time they professed friendship to his face. His mind was so wracked that he said it gave him ‘the impression of being in hell,’ but the day after the cause

¹ *Livingstone's Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 137.

for this impression had passed, he 'restored 'upwards of thirty rescued to their friends'—rescued from a hideous Arab massacre.

There were amongst the invaders some of high degree, men whose cunning and ruthless wickedness quickly made havoc in the country—Tippoo Tib ; Mohamed bin Saleh ; Mohamad Bogarib ; Hamees, and others of the richer sort. In addition to these, and of a baser kind, Dugumbe, Tagamoio, and their fellows had headquarters at Ujiji, and issued thence to carry slaughter and pillage in all directions.

What these fiends were capable of is shown in such passages as the massacre at Nyangwé. Here Livingstone witnessed an act having for its object the intimidation of the Manyuema people.

The Arabs secreted their armed force near a creek which led into the Congo. A busy market crowded with women and children was invaded by three of their number armed with guns. A quarrel was picked, and instantly the work of destruction began ; the people were ruthlessly shot down. No sooner was there a rush for their canoes than the armed

men in ambush rose and decimated them. The poor wretches were shot down on the land and as they swam. Numbers were drowned. ‘The Arabs themselves estimated ‘the loss of life at between three hundred and ‘thirty and four hundred souls. . . . After ‘the terrible affair in the water, the party of ‘Tagamoio, who was the chief perpetrator, ‘continued to fire on the people there, and fire ‘their villages. As I write I hear the loud ‘wails on the left bank over those who are ‘there slain, ignorant of their many friends now ‘in the depths of the Lualaba (Congo). Oh ! let ‘Thy kingdom come ! No one will ever know ‘the exact loss on this bright sultry summer ‘morning. It gave me the impression of ‘being in hell. All the slaves in the camp ‘rushed at the fugitives on land and plundered ‘them.

‘Some escaped to me and were protected. ‘Dugumbé saved twenty-one, and of his own ‘accord liberated them ; they were brought ‘to me and remained over-night. One woman ‘of the saved had a musket-ball through her ‘thigh, another in her arm. . . . I counted

'twelve villages burning.' Here is evidence to show that Livingstone was understood to be the white man who was appalled by what was going on, and tried his best to serve the poor people in their misery. He says—

'I restored upwards of thirty of the rescued to their friends. . . . An old man called Kabobo came for his old wife; I asked her 'if this were her husband; she went to him 'and put her arm lovingly around him and 'said "Yes." I gave her five strings of beads 'to buy food, all her stores being destroyed 'with her house; she bowed down and put 'her forehead to the ground as thanks for herself and old Kabobo. The tears stood in her 'eyes as she went off.'¹

Now we must recollect that these occurrences took place in a country excited to the highest pitch, and where, according to their custom, the natives transmit news with incredible rapidity. The impressions concerning Dr. Livingstone's goodness were in startling contrast to those produced by the Arab barbarities. There was ample time to confirm

¹ *Livingstone's Last Journals*, vol. ii. pp. 134—137.

them again and again—two whole years. The extracts given above could be multiplied to a great length, but it will suffice if we have quite enough in hand to comprehend that the men, and especially the poor frantic women, realized in their desolation what England’s representative was to them in the year 1871.

We pass over the intervening twenty years, and notice the sorrow, the very natural sorrow, resulting from the losses of the Emin Relief Expedition. Profit may yet accrue to Africa from a revelation of the lurid scenes to which we have had partial access, but it will depend entirely upon the amount of honesty available. It is not honest to strain every nerve to drag the argument first to this side and then to that over the bodies of dead Englishmen, whilst dead natives may lie strewn broadcast without even passing notice.

The tendency to drop the subject has been overdone. In Africa when a notable man expires, poor women and girls are smothered alive in his grave. It is by no means uncommon for them to avert their fate by flying

to the white man, who will not refuse them sanctuary. If such as she who perished for the edification of a naturalist at Riba-riba seems to appeal in spirit to us lest she be buried away out of mind in the land where all things are forgotten—save the so-called representation of our nation—I for one am not inclined to deny her a hearing. It is not often that we can get an insight to the mind of an African woman, simply because, I imagine, she lies hidden away in a darkness which few eyes can see through. But one dares to say that when the truthful narrator recounts his experiences in Africa, it is still the same story that pertains elsewhere. She it is who will be trustful where all others are consumed with fear—I will point out presently what some of the special fears are; she it is who will try to save the white man's life; she it is who in every sense shows herself superior to the man. Let me strengthen this assertion, though I have already given instances which confirm it. Charles Livingstone relates that when travelling with his brother, and having lost his way in Africa, a

woman saved him with food and drink when he was in great extremity. No doubt she was as much despised as most women are in these lands, but she said that it would bring sorrow to his family and friends if he died in a distant land, and she wished to avert that. Again, of my own personal knowledge I can add another instance to show that in these African villages the women are quick to listen and to pick up the imports of the whisper or rumour. Two of my colleagues sought shelter in the village of a chief whose reputation was bad. There was no alternative, and as a result their assassination was planned to take place during the night. At the certain risk of her life, a poor woman, who had never seen a white man before that day, became aware of the plot, and secretly informed the porters. In this manner their lives were saved, but only after a severe fight which took place when they suddenly left the place at sunset. It was at Stanley Falls, no great distance from Riba-riba, that a slave-woman fled to Mr. Deane and his companion for shelter when most brutally treated by

the Arabs. She had full faith in the mercy of an Englishman. Whence had she derived this faith? Was it from the fact that Livingstone had given sanctuary to Manyuema women when their tribe was decimated by these Arab fiends? I think so. Mr. Jephson is anxious that we should know how a woman came spontaneously to him on a notable occasion, present in hand, to testify her belief in the white man's integrity. In fact, we may go so far as to say that in Africa to-day you have the equivalent of savagedom in the earliest historical ages—nor are the characteristics of woman's nature wanting to complete the resemblance.

• It was Rahab who was quick to discern, when terror overspread the land, that faith and trust could be put in the new-comers. Abigail, with her woman's wit to help her, saw the inevitable and was quick to act; and your African woman is own sister in these respects to both.

Thrust on one side, treated too often as mere animals by both Moslems and the men of their own tribes—see what disadvantages

they labour under! But if there is a dawn at all you cannot keep them back. If there is ever to be a resurrection and a better life in these human tomb-lands, the women will stay behind those who flee, and if needs be will wait and weep through the coldest hour till dawn breaks.

How are we dealing with this? The girl of Riba-riba and her fate afford the answer. She belonged to the same tribe in which Livingstone spent those two years. She in common with the rest must have heard the stories of his goodness, for it must ever shine brighter and brighter as the darkness thickens there. The place where she died was very near Bambarré as native journeys go. For her there was the apparition too of the white man—the countryman of Livingstone—but for her it was death, and what a death! By strange fatuity Mr. Jameson *will* tell the tale himself, lest it shall not be truly told! By a stranger fatuity it is forced into publicity, to safeguard his name and fame!! There are two accounts: one says the girl uttered a shriek when, at 'Tippoo Tib's

instigation, she was dragged before himself and this traveller—her life and body first bought over for six pieces of handkerchief; the other, written by him who will be his own historian, says that 'the most extraordinary thing was, that she never uttered a sound nor struggled till she fell'¹ beneath the cannibal's knife—he, the narrator, seated silent, the looker-on! One thinks the latter may be the correct version, and this is why.

In David Livingstone's earliest wanderings he once lay under the body of a wounded lion as it smashed his bones in its raging jaws. He ever after treasured up a memory of those moments; for in them he experienced an inner depth of the mercy of our Maker. He learnt that a numbness comes over the nerves of the prey, for he felt its soothing action in his own case, as all fear was absent though the brain was clear and active still. He argued from this that probably the antelope suffers little when the wild beast's breath is upon it, and its life is passing away.

I conceive that this has been repeated in

¹ *Story of the Rear Column*, p. 291.

the land of Ivory. I conceive that the good God who averted terror from Livingstone when he was in the lion’s mouth, may have taken away this poor child’s horror when the glare of the hyena’s eye fell upon her and the death-grip came.

What a triumph for the Arabs of Central Africa! The act took place at a spot where they are in touch with colleagues upon Lake Nyassa to the south and Lake Victoria Nyassa on the north; in both places Mohame-dans and Christians are in fierce rivalry, and before the native races. They are in quick communication with the mouth of the Congo in West Africa and Zanzibar on its East coast. ‘The Arabs hate the way that the natives ‘show their liking for a white man,’¹ wrote the unfortunate Mr. Jameson. Alas! what more could he have done to destroy this state of things. Thence, from that ghastly hut emerged the story which by this time is current talk wherever the Congo flows, or the caravan track reaches, and the credit of the Christian is gone.

¹ *Story of the Rear Column*, p. 344.

Even here we cannot say that the disaster ends. There have been from time immemorial some strange stories in Central Africa regarding the white man. By common consent he comes out of the sea. This of course is a consequence of the optical delusion which makes his vessel, slowly rising on the horizon, appear to be coming up from the ocean depths.

Another delusion of a different nature offers most serious obstacles when we wish to speedily ingratiate ourselves with the natives ; I allude to the all-prevailing belief that the British especially are cannibals.

I have previously shown that the object of our cruisers is to liberate slaves on the high seas. Part of the dhow-captain's strategy is to persuade his slaves that if our sailors can only lay hands on them they will eat them. So it comes about that when getting the worst of a chase at sea the 'dhow' is run straight into the surf ; she goes to pieces, and her disgorged human chattels are cast on shore. Instead of waiting for their deliverers, they rush pell-mell for the bush and forest, impelled by the terror of this tale ! Nothing

is more vexatious than this. Of course it means an opportunity missed for scoring against the slave-trade, and a loss of prize-money. At the same time it enables the Arabs to call their victims out of their hiding-places when the coast is clear, and they march them along the shore to the next slave market.

In fact, one finds this story everywhere, both ashore and afloat. It is no uncommon thing upon entering a native village in the interior to notice a headlong rush of the women and children to save themselves. I recollect in 1861 a rumour got abroad that Livingstone's steamer was about to steam up through the hill country and forest; it was said that sailors were kept in her hold to make clothes, and that they were fed on the natives. As a consequence, many of the poor creatures whom we cut out of the slave-gangs fled at once, and we never heard of them again.

Once more; the same vessel three years afterwards lay in Moçambique harbour, and was about to take a number of liberated women and children to the Cape; the Arabs came

off in their canoes and diligently tried to instil fear into the minds of the women with a repetition of the cannibal story.

One may add in passing that cannibalism prevails in a well-defined region of Africa, and in that alone. Amongst the east coast tribes the idea of it is as repugnant as it would be in London.

Is it too much then to expect that every officer, of either service, will try his best, should occasion offer, to express on behalf of his countrymen his utter detestation of the very mention of the crime, taking care to remember that he is watched at every step, and that it is desirable to show his true colours amongst all sorts of prevalent misconceptions?

The missionary has absolutely to trace the doctrines and creeds which he promulgates in order to see how far they are enlarged upon or distorted by the native imagination; he can then stop mischief getting foothold when necessary.

For the explorer or traveller, who has his own honour and that of his country in careful keeping, it goes without saying that he

exercises careful vigilance in this respect. He is a poor creature indeed if, as some say, it becomes a matter of course that he will deteriorate morally in savagedom. A vast number, speaking from their own experience, have hitherto conceived the reverse to be the case. In no place in the known world is a discipline of this kind so necessary as in the ivory-yielding fields of Central Africa.

But the case is altered now. The British horror of cannibalism is at an end. Thousands of mongrel Moslems and their attendant slaves can testify to this, and who is to say them nay !

* * * * *

Since the rest of this theme must principally be occupied with considerations coming under the heading of ‘Ivory,’ I will now invite a closer scrutiny of the revelations which belong to its acquisition.

Unquestionably Mr. Stanley was the originator of that geographical and political monstrosity the ‘Congo State’; but for his determined exploration of the river, and his well-confirmed testimony to its importance, the State could never have assumed form.

No effort has been spared to assure the world at frequent intervals that for all practical purposes the destruction of the interior slave-trade and the development of Congo trade may be taken as interchangeable terms.

As a consequence of civilizing operations more ivory now comes out of the Congo water-way than from any other part of the world, and the export is largely upon the increase.

Nothing can exceed the force of Mr. Stanley's denunciations of this ivory trade as it is carried on by the Arabs of the Congo. What a refrain it is! 'Every tusk, piece and scrap, 'in the possession of an Arab trader, has been 'steeped and dyed in blood. Every pound 'weight has cost the life of a man, woman, or 'child.'¹ A dozen travellers affirm the same.

From amongst these 'Arabs of the Congo' one man has emerged; he is a head and shoulders above his fellows in all that belongs to the raid or the slave-gang. What Attila was, east and west, what Ghenghis Khan was to nations in his day—all that and more is

¹ *In Darkest Africa*, vol. i. p. 230.

Tippoo Tib likely to be amongst the millions of Central Africa in this year of grace.

For some time at least Mr. Stanley never missed a chance of upholding the career of one to whom he owed so much—he would work out some of the problems which Livingstone left unsolved. It is not too much to hope that when he is about to attempt the rescue of a lieutenant of General Gordon’s, and with the whole world from which to select colleagues, the very last man he would choose to walk arm-in-arm with into Africa would be Tippoo Tib. Imagine for a moment the effect upon the populace of Zanzibar (whence they started), upon slaves and slave-traders alike! Again, what could the slaves borne away at the same time to serve the Expedition think of our consistency! Picture the effect upon the tribes along the Congo, scattered and peeled by Tippoo Tib—what could they realize but a conjunction of forces that meant a more utter destruction still!

I listened to a lecture recently given by one of Mr. Stanley’s retinue—Mr. Herbert Ward. He exhibited a photographic slide of a Congo

scene. No less than £40,000 worth of ivory lay on the river's bank ready to be shipped. Every tusk belonged to Tippoo Tib, and the lecturer stated that each pound of ivory had been seized by the slaves of Tippoo Tib from the natives, and in three months. But don't let us weigh too heavily on the 'man's' descriptions when the 'master' is only too willing to assist. Now Mr. Stanley's strong point is calculation—calculation from ton to ounce. Here, and at length, is what he says about ivory and the present manner of acquiring it.

'Every tusk, piece and scrap in the possession of an Arab trader has been steeped and dyed in blood. Every pound weight has caused the death of a man, woman, or child; for every five pounds a hut has been burned; for every two tusks a whole village has been destroyed; every twenty tusks have been obtained at the price of a district with all its people, villages, and plantations.'¹ One feels that in the face of his Livingstone-inspired travels, with the philanthropical pose,

¹ *In Darkest Africa*, vol. i. p. 230.

and his hand on the pulse of freedom, it must be absolutely impossible for Mr. Stanley to be seen with one who, by his own standard, causes as many deaths as the plague. The truth is that the matter is such an uncomfortable one to sift out to the bottom—one in which so many well-known and distinguished names are mixed up, that by common consent the eyes are closed against these realities.

But it is best to state boldly, that if this attempt to serve two masters is to continue, by carrying missionaries up stream in your steamer one day, and coming down stream the next laden with ivory, the result can only be deplorable—crudely put, such has been the process of opening up the Congo to Christianity and civilization!

All these transactions are narrowly watched by natives and Arabs alike. With the latter we have dealt hardly of late solely on account of their slaving propensities. In the hearts of the former we have commissioned men like Livingstone to implant hopes which are now ruthlessly destroyed.

I aver that if we desire to embitter the curse of the Moslem—to make him raise his hands to the common Father of us all, and bid Him look down on our double-dealing and hypocrisy—we are going the sure way to bring it about. Do I state the case too plainly? If so, I point to Bushiri, a tenth-rate slaver hanging from his gibbet on the mainland opposite Zanzibar. I point to delegates from all nations sitting in conclave to suppress the slave-trade at Brussels; but I see the compact being signed at the same time between the representatives of African enlightenment and the agent of Africa's utmost misery; and no sooner is the deed executed than Mr. Stanley and Tippoo Tib sail away to the Congo together. The eventual outcome of such an alliance is now a matter of history, but the effect on the distracted tribes has yet to be brought to light as time rolls on. Our Arch Enemy may boast that the footprints of Livingstone and Gordon have been clean smoothed out now by the Expedition's tramp; but the end is not yet, for all that.

Truly these unfortunate ‘bow-and-arrow tribes,’ as I have called them, deserve more consideration than Europe has hitherto meted out to them. Conceive what it must be to doubly secure the position of Tippoo Tib and his men by making him the Governour of the Stanley Falls Station ; imagine what the tribes must think of us whites ! Surely if you had searched Africa over to secure the particular faggot with which to heat the furnace of her affliction one time hotter still, you have it in this act.

Let us now go back to the question of employing slave-labour under the specious terms of Zanzibari portorage and so forth. I hear it said, If you cannot get free labourers (to make a railway on the Congo, for instance) what are you to do ? The first inclination is to repeat the farther question by way of reply, ‘Are you willing to condone foul means because fair ones are not available ; is the end to justify the means ?’ But I should rather meet the argument by pointing to the enormous employment of free labour on—looking from our present stand-point—the

other side of the Zambesi. Even this is not necessary. Amongst Arabs and all sorts of slave-traders the thriving plantations of the Shiré Highlands are all worked by free labourers. These men come from great distances: they will either hoe your garden of 100,000 coffee trees, or turn out well-burnt bricks for building at 3s. 6d. per thousand; but then there is this difference—you have never deceived them, never sided with the slavers, never tampered with your good name as a white man. Throughout the Congo State it is the reverse of all this; no wonder you have to drag slaves all round Africa to make your railways there!

The Western nations cannot stop the entire evil for many a day. But such as have become compromised in these scandalous associations may surely abstain from further complicity.

Already the Arabs are alarmed at the Germans, who, truth to tell, have not minced matters with the Arab slave-traders as we have done; it is a stinging rebuke that whilst they hang a Bushiri for his minor iniquities, we can search out the major murderers to

cater for us according as we can turn their manners and customs to account !

If we jointly agree to starve the Arabs out of powder and muskets, they will lose so much of their power over the natives that it will become a question whether Muscat will not be safer for them than the Manyuema country.

Great Britain has taken over Zanzibar, and can either pull or cut wires as she likes, more especially such as these fellows hold the ends of in Central Africa. Up to the present time she has simply encouraged, fostered, and stimulated Zanzibar—utterly unconcerned as to the use to which her countenance and support are turned for encouraging slavery.

Contemplating our national life, and watching the mark which it has made upon the fate of distant countries, one thing is so observable that it becomes a truism—if our Foreign Office is to take up what is called philanthropic work, it can only be brought about by pressure from without. In no case does the fault lie with the Ministry of the day ; the initiative must be with the public. It is but fair to say that all appears to indicate an

anxious willingness at the Foreign Office for that impulse which is essential. The ins and outs of the difficult Portuguese question have necessitated an arduous and repelling study of half-digested geography and wholly unknown savage tribes. Names to which the English tongue finds it hard to lay itself must be mastered; preposterous drafts upon assumed ignorance have to be met, and to be marked 'no effects,' and returned to those who present them.

Cunning—astonishing, vexatious, and unique, takes the place of ordinary diplomatic good faith. The official of Downing Street pores over the missionaries' map (the only one ever made in the region under dispute), and traces Great Britain's wise untarnished influence over this mountain range and along the shores of that vast inland lake, but he has to raise his head from the task to scan the telegram which speaks of the Union Jack under the Portuguese heel; for a solace in his distraction he may listen to vapourings about Albuquerque and Camoens!

However, our cause is in safe hands; it has

been upheld in a masterly manner by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, and it is for all concerned to recognize this honestly and thankfully.

But respecting the *fons et origo* of the east coast slave-trade, viz. the Zanzibar dominion, perhaps a little impatience is now excusable. Our engagement is to make our recent operation destructive to slaving, but the usual days of grace have well-nigh run off, and there are no new visible signs of an inclination to meet it.

To the mind of the Muscat Arab—whether he be located at Zanzibar or Pemba, that is to say in our new Protectorate, or at the head of a gang of marauders in Central Africa—one thing seems to be fairly within the bounds of that inevitable which to his way of thinking is a mere sport of Kismet. He knows that slavery and the slave-trade must cease wherever Britain holds the reins of government.

Looking back for thirty years, your Arab wonders why this has not come already. To his way of thinking we have had nothing else in view since General Rigby opened the eyes of all whom it concerned as to our intentions.

It has been a too faltering advance against him and his vexatious and cruel ways.

Nor is this all; he is quite prepared to tell you how you will put a stop to a traffic which flourishes still under the prodigious demand I have alluded to in previous pages. His correspondents live at Bombay; he is surrounded by our Indian subjects at Zanzibar, and it is a very practical matter to him to ascertain what we have done in India now that we have exchanged Heligoland in Europe for the Protectorate of Zanzibar and Pemba. Briefly he has learnt the following fact.

We found India swarming with slaves, and we govern it to-day without a slave in it. What is the date of the Emancipation Act? When was the abolition of slavery proclaimed? Reader, it never has been proclaimed; there is no emancipation act. If this excites your wonder, follow me in the next few sentences whilst I show you the all-powerful process of extinction.

Doctors tell us now, that there is a Providential arrangement in each of us which has at last been revealed. Watchful and expectant

in the human spleen lies the ‘phagocyte’ ready to meet the invading ‘bacillus’ bent upon working his own will in the establishment of sore disease.

There is no special disturbance—perhaps a headache or two, or a restless night—but the enemy is demolished, the thing is done, and the malady averted.

British rule has been a Providence in this respect to India. The particular destroyer whom we have posted in that empire to throttle slavery bears a name very familiar to us. I repeat that we have never abolished the status of slavery there; what we have done is to deny that the institution has any *legal* status.¹ This one word ‘legal’ lies vigilant, formidable, and insatiable. Does ‘the right of possession in man’ assert itself, instantly it is despatched.

See how far-reaching the effects are of this simple word. An Indian subject buys a slave, who in turn runs away from him. He

¹ This was the particular means for destroying the slave-trade that Sir John Kirk, G.C.M.G., so strongly advocated whilst he held office at Zanzibar as H. M. Political Agent and Consul-general.

would have him seized, but the law denies that he is his *legal* property. His neighbour conceals him and employs his slave; he has no *legal* power to interfere; the magistrate tells him as much. Once more, he owes a large sum which must be paid in money or kind; so as he begins to have different views respecting slave property, he discharges his debt by handing over so many of his human chattels to his equally wily creditor. Six months after the demand upon him is renewed; he goes into Court to show that his indebtedness was wiped out when he transferred his slaves in payment, but his plea is quashed; the Law Courts do not recognize property in slaves. Finally, he makes his will, bequeathing his slaves to his heirs and assigns, who in turn discover that this particular item in his bequest has no validity, is in fact so much waste-paper—he cannot dispose of that which is not *legal* property at all.¹

Knowing all this, the Arabs of the east coast of Africa wonder, as well they may, that this enactment does not come into operation

¹ This Act against the Legal Status of Slavery was passed in 1843—Act V.

now that we are paramount. They have driven dhow after dhow full sail through a dozen treaties ; for years their sultans have breathed wordy death and parchment destruction against the slave-trade in exchange for British help, friendship, patronage, protection—and decorations. All the time the thing has been a gigantic imposture. If ever a nation entered into an engagement to stay this fooling, England has done so in the Heligoland exchange and the Brussels Conference.

In the estimation of every one conversant with our anti-slavery policy, the time has arrived when it is right to insist upon the abolition of the legal status of slavery in the Zanzibar Protectorate as a means to an end, and already proved effectual from one end of India to another.

It is commonly said that the ivory evil will in time work its own remedy, that is to say, when the last elephant dies the ivory trade and all its abominations must cease. A moment's reflection will deny us this relief to our consciences. The Arabs are not hunters, and do not destroy the elephants,

nor do the captives whom they arm take up this occupation. On the contrary, the sole object is to make raids upon tribes and villages where ivory is known to exist, and the real hunters are exterminated in the fights which ensue ; for it is the Winchester and Remington rifle pitted against bow and arrow. As a consequence, elephants are increasing just as their natural enemies are destroyed. For instance, Mr. Arnot described the great Lunda Valley to be now teeming with elephants and game. A few years ago, and when the district was densely populated, no elephants were to be seen. Slave raids have swept out the population ; the elephants have re-occupied the country, and are increasing and multiplying. It follows then, that when Tippoo Tib and the horde of Arab ruffians whom we supply from the coast with firearms have accomplished their desolating purpose, they will for the most part withdraw with their ill-gotten gains, and the elephants will have more rest than they have had for a century.

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Is it a time to be silent? Livingstone and Gordon are gone. Privileged to know, to confer and to plan with both for the amelioration of the lot of these Satan-haunted tribes, must one be still silent? When one watches the wrong tactics of the most right-minded men; when one sees those whose names are honourably inscribed on the military or commercial rolls of good service—men who have been true and noble pioneers in other spheres than Africa—dashing from shoal to rock, is it to be ‘hush’ when dead friends seem to watch your lips for just one outspoken word on the old lines?

At any price, let those implicated free themselves from a false position, and from such a position as I have opened out. And may some of the wisdom of Solomon take the place of our present *régime*! He drew Ivory from Africa to the infinite benefit of the continent; we do it for its infinite harm!

Solomon by his commerce threw beams of light into all lands whence came the ‘Ivory, Apes, and Peacocks’ of our Bible story. It was his great opportunity for drawing the

people out of themselves; and, as we have seen, ivory played no unimportant part in bringing heathen nations to know their God. We are doing all that lies in our power to reverse the process.

The same love of ivory finds the same place in our European hearts, it is true, that they of old time kept for it; but here the comparison ends.

You may say that by our commercial relations with African tribes we must surely have let in light. I reply, if it be so, it is the blaze of the burning village, or the flash of the Winchester rifle—at best it is the glare from the smoke-stack of the Congo steamer bearing away tons upon tons of ivory. These are the gleams of a day for which we are largely responsible.

* * * * *

Our contemplation is well nigh its end. How many hours are spent in the mood in these extravagant days! It may be that the brain's excursions are never more daring, far afield, feather-footed than when the ivory-backed looking-glass is in the hand, the

Kimberley diamonds on the neck, the Karoo ostrich feathers in the hair, and fancy is free to see things darkly or brightly, but hardly face to face yet!

But, reader, if you be a man, and look long enough, there is this odd fact: reverse the glass, gaze steadfastly and honestly upon the broad white disk, and if you have a British heart you shall discern something like this: a vision that slowly takes form on the laminations of the ivory—a vision of burly, outraged, rough-witted men, far inside this century, thrashing in London streets a foreign general of high rank because all Europe knew that he had been cruel to women, and had scored their backs with the lash in a brutal way. There was no place for him in this country, no feeling but of execration; and Baron Haynau knew perhaps for the first time what ignominy can belong to flight.

Have things so far changed that it is possible now to make of a man whose name I have mentioned so often in these pages an ally, a Governour, perhaps a friend—no matter whether the groans of dying African men

and tortured African women have been the refrain of his own setting in his own ears for a quarter of a century? Search the wide world over, and by the light of Mr. Stanley's ivory trade revelations, who has set so much innocent blood flowing as Tippoo Tib? If report speaks true this man is to be the invited guest to Belgium, perhaps to England.

Well may the ivory-backed mirror drop with the vision of his brown face looking in a curious half-amused fashion, whilst first on one side of him and then behind his back moves another figure well known to us.

* * * * *

Mr. Stanley found and described a Dark Continent. He has dealt with it in length and breadth, and no pains have been spared to set before us its sins and barbarities. He returns from it once more: this time he calls it 'Darkest Africa.' It is impossible to gainsay such a verdict.

THE END.

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